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# warm email template

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# Writing Warm Emails

## script & tips

Cold calling can feel scary, impersonal and downright icky. However, connecting with individuals who you don't know provides incredible opportunities for learning from their lived experiences, strengthening your understanding of the world and helping to boost your creative confidence.

The opposite of a 'cold call' is a 'warm email'; a polite, positive and to-the-point written communication to act as an introduction. This is my personal template that I use all the time for reaching out to new podcast guests, resulting in extremely high reply rates. This template is a culmination of corporate sales training experience, helping university students find internships and my own trial and error, 15 years in the making.

**GOAL:** Get the meeting!

This warm email should make you appear polite, show you've done your homework and conversational in tone. Reduce any or all red flags (such as a long time commitment, a meeting that's challenging to schedule, etc.) by communicating strategically: make it short and sweet!

Below you will find a script & tips to help you make introductions.



# Warm Email Script

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Hello \_\_\_\_\_ (*refer to the individual by their preferred name<sup>1</sup>*),

My name is \_\_\_\_\_ (*your name*) and I learned about your work through \_\_\_\_\_ (*a person, a place or thing<sup>2</sup>*) and

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***(something specific about their work to show that you genuinely care<sup>3</sup>).***

I am \_\_\_\_\_ (something about yourself<sup>4</sup>).

***I would love to have a \_\_\_\_\_ (time frame<sup>5</sup>) minute conversation  
\_\_\_\_\_ (location<sup>6</sup>) at your convenience to learn more about  
\_\_\_\_\_ (what you want to get out of the conversation<sup>7</sup>)***

I very much appreciate your time and I look forward to hearing from you!

\_\_\_\_\_ (your email signature<sup>8</sup>)

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**1** This is where research comes in. The Internet makes this easier and more possible than ever before. How do they refer to themselves in the world? Their first name? A less formal abbreviation of their first name? A more formal inclusion of titles like 'Dr.'?

**2** Bonus points if there is a human who connects the two of you. Mention them at this point because it will often peak someone's interest more than generic email with no human connection.

**3** It may be that you saw them speak at an event, for example, so tie in what you enjoyed about seeing them at the event or mention another detail that shows them you are genuinely interested. It might just be that you saw their work on social media and loved it. If so, tell them and be specific so that you communicate engagement and authenticity. **Bold this section.**

**4** This is the time and place to write 1-2 sentences about who you are that bridges the gap between the introductory section and 'the ask' (which comes next). Include anything you deem most relevant. You don't need to say everything about yourself; just focus on what will get you the meeting. For example, if you are reaching out to someone in your industry whose job you hope to have one day, let them know that you're starting out in the industry and mention what you really love about the industry you both share. Keep this section short and relevant.

**5** Keep the ask short! I recommend asking for 15 minutes if it will be a virtual meeting and no more than 30 minutes for an in-person meeting. For my podcast guests I like to schedule a 45-minute time slot, however if they are high-profile or openly-busy guests, I stick to a shorter time frame because the longer your 'ask' the more likely they will say no. **Bold this section.**

**6** Keep the location realistic. There are pros and cons to both virtual and in-person meetings. Virtual meetings allow you to connect with anyone, almost anywhere in the world, but it's also not the same as sitting face-to-face with someone. In-person is more personal, but there is a greater cost involved, therefore there's greater opportunity for them to say no. If you are asking to meet in-person, don't make them travel; go to them. Remember that they are doing *you* the favour. **Bold this section.**

**7** Be specific, transparent and keep it to one main goal. The more general or wishy-washy you are with your ask, the less likely they are to say yes. All they know about you is from this communication and if it seems unorganized, generic or like you're not sure what you want, these are all red flags in their mind that tell them that this meeting will be work. You want to communicate (consciously and unconsciously) that this will be an opportunity for them to chat about themselves and what they do with you, not requiring any additional work on their part. A specific 'ask' here might include learning how they moved through their career path to get where they are today or learning their creative process as it relates to the project you mentioned earlier in the email, for example. **Bold this section.**

**8** Sign off with your name, title (whether professional or self-appointed), email address and phone number. Make it as easy as possible for them to contact you. This also serves as a visual reminder that you are someone they can trust, rather than signing your email with just your first name.

# What Happens Next?

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If the first person you reach out to doesn't respond, give them the benefit of the doubt that they're busy and not that you did anything wrong (it's not you, it's them).

Reach out to the next person and the next and the next, knowing that (just like in sales), asking for the coffee chat or the Zoom call is a number's game. Cast a wide net and reach out to lots of people, knowing you may get a couple of responses over dozens of emails. This is a realistic way to approach the process.

Once you get a response, follow up promptly to confirm a meeting date and time. Show that you care through the speed and excitement of your reply. If it's a virtual meeting, *you* should set up a Zoom call or Google Meet (with the link communicated via email, a calendar invite or both) so it's as easy as possible. And then follow through!

- Be there a few minutes before your scheduled time.
- Look professional and bring positive, brave energy to the meeting.
- Think about virtual call etiquette: quiet place, limited distractions, strong Internet connection, be aware of your background.
- Have a list of questions prepared, doing research ahead of time and ask questions that aren't easily 'Googlable'.
- Plan to say a few things about yourself (they'll likely want to know).
- Keep the meeting focused on them and actively listen to their answers, giving them time to speak without interrupting. Give them your full attention and enthusiasm.
- Keep a piece of paper and a pencil beside you to jot down ideas or follow up questions you can ask.
- Respect their schedule and don't go past the initial time frame you agreed upon.
- Send a follow up email soon after the meeting is over to thank them for their time, incorporating a few key ideas you learned in the meeting
- You may wish to continue nurturing the relationship by adding them to professional social media channels. You may also want to send them relevant articles and/or events they may be interested in or just send an email to say hi and circle back to how you've implemented an idea that the two of you spoke about. Do this every few months if this is a relationship that feels genuine and that you want to keep alive.

Before you know it, you'll have a whole network of creative confidants to learn from and explore with. And this is an excellent strategy for building a professional and/or creative network in a way that feels less forced and less scary than cold calling or traditional networking. Bit-by-bit, person-by-person.

# Tips for the Process:

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- Clean up your online presence. Google yourself to see what comes up and scrub social media of anything that might be a red flag to the outside world. It can be a tough balance to achieve: feeling authentic to yourself by expressing yourself on social media and also putting your professional face forward. It's your individual comfort level, but always be aware of what others can find about you online.
- Don't ask for a job, but instead ask for advice, ideas, leads, and referrals.
- Just because jobs aren't posted, doesn't mean they don't exist.
- It's not who you know that gets you your next opportunity, *it's who knows you*.
- Do your research before you email or direct message:
  - Can you find their direct email address? (This is ALWAYS better than 'info@...')
  - What do you know about the work that they do?
- Building connections this way is a marathon, not a sprint. You won't always receive responses and you may even receive a few negative responses, but don't give up! Warm emails really work and can be done at any stage of your creative life.